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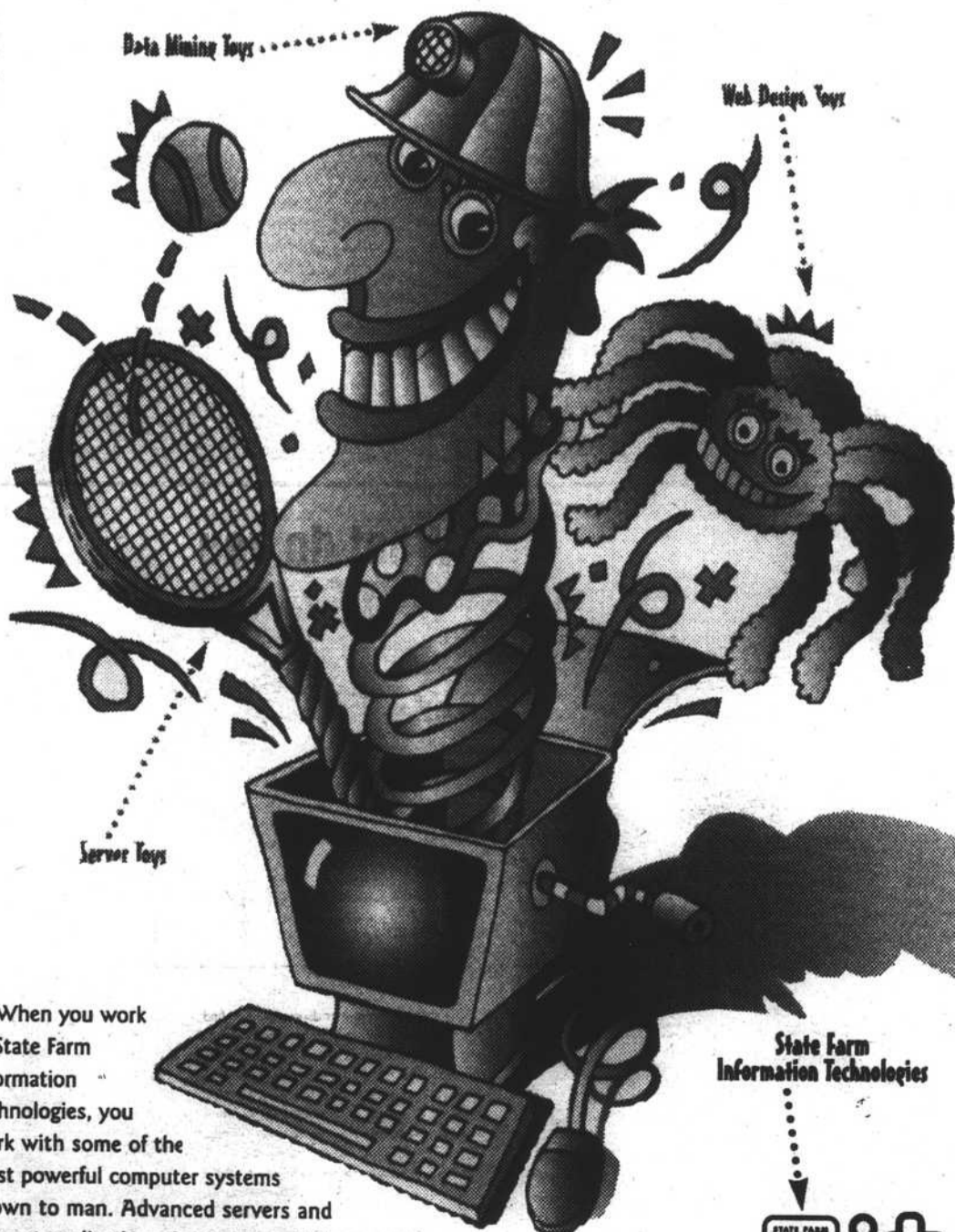
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Internships can help in job-finding success

By KELLY ROMANSKI
Staff writer

When students try to enter the workaday world, their GPAs may not matter as much as they think.

Though recruiters still note students' academic success, several employers in the Lincoln area said they ranked hands-on internships and pertinent work experience as most important when hiring employees.

"Employers are looking more and more for experience, not just the degree," said Emily Wilber, a student employment specialist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Career Services Center. "The internship is close to as important as the degree."

Having an internship lets employers know the applicant is able to do the job, she said. "It gives confidence to the students so they are better able to sell themselves," she said.

Sometimes it takes an internship to open students' eyes to their own potential.

Stephanie Dill, a junior civil engineering major, took a paid engineering internship this summer with HWS Consulting Group Inc. in Denver.

She worked on environmental engineering projects and filed reviews for the Environmental Protection Agency and the Colorado Department of Public Health.

"After this summer, I realized that that's what I want to do," Dill said. "It helped me decide. Having experience really helps a lot."

Local employers also said it's important for students to have internships under their belts.

KLKN-TV (Channel 8) News

"(Internships give) confidence to the students so they are better able to sell themselves."

EMILY WILBER

student employment specialist

Director Mark Haggar has hired many interns and said internships are critical to getting a job after graduation.

"You definitely have to have it," he said. "You have to function at a whole different speed at the professional level than at the collegiate level. Interns gain a lot more knowledge when they have experience in the work environment."

Marilyn Muir, a member services manager at AAA Insurance Agency, agreed.

Internships are good experiences that "definitely help your chances" of getting a job, she said.

Maryann Mrowca, news editor for the Omaha bureau of The Associated Press, said students' internships often mean more to her than their GPAs.

She said completion of an internship in her field shows that an applicant has newsroom experience with sources and with an editor.

Wilber said UNL's Career Services Center is the best place for students to start looking for an internship.

Students can begin their search for an internship at Career Services' Monster Career Fair on Tuesday from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

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